

What is Claimed is:

1. A method for a mailing machine to change operational features comprising:
 - establishing a communication link with a remote data center via a network;
 - receiving from the remote data center, via the communication link, a directory file, the directory file including an indication of all operational features that should be enabled within the mailing machine, each of the operational features having at least one associated operating file required to implement the operational feature;
 - determining if an operating file stored in a memory of the mailing machine is not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file; and
 - deleting any operating files stored in the memory of the mailing machine that are not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file,
 - wherein deletion of any operating file stored in the memory of the mailing machine that is not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file disables an operational feature with which the deleted operating file is associated.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - receiving from the data center at least one operating file associated with a new operational feature to be enabled in the mailing machine, the directory file including an indication of the new operational feature; and
 - storing the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature in the memory of the mailing machine.
3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
 - sending confirmation to the data center of receipt of the directory file and the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature.
4. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

activating the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature, thereby enabling the new operational feature in the mailing machine.

5. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

updating an activation status table stored in the memory of the mailing machine to correspond to the directory file.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein the directory file and at least one operating file are signed at the data center with a digital signature, the method further comprising:

verifying the digital signature, wherein if the digital signature does not verify, processing of the directory file and at least one operating file are not performed.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein operational features include accounting features, postal service features, type and capacity of external scales that can be utilized with the mailing machine, printing of ad slogans, printing of inscriptions, and data capture features.

8. A mailing machine adapted to have operational features remotely changed, the mailing machine comprising:

means for establishing a communication link with a data center via a network to receive from the data center, via the communication link, a directory file, the directory file including an indication of all operational features that should be enabled within the mailing machine, each of the operational features having at least one associated operating file required to implement the operational feature;

means for determining if an operating file stored in a memory of the mailing machine is not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file; and

means for deleting any operating files stored in the memory of the mailing machine that are not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file,

wherein deletion of any operating file stored in the memory of the mailing machine that is not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file disables an operational feature with which the deleted operating file is associated.

9. The mailing machine of claim 8, further comprising:

means for receiving from the data center at least one operating file associated with a new operational feature to be enabled in the mailing machine, the directory file including an indication of the new operational feature; and

means for storing the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature in the mailing machine.

10. The mailing machine of claim 9, further comprising:

means for sending confirmation to the data center of receipt of the directory file and the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature.

11. The mailing machine of claim 9, further comprising:

means for activating the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature, thereby enabling the new operational feature in the mailing machine.

12. The mailing machine of claim 9, further comprising:

an activation status table stored in the memory of the mailing machine; and

means for updating the activation status table to correspond to the directory file.

13. The mailing machine of claim 9, wherein the directory file and at least one operating file are signed at the data center with a digital signature, the mailing machine further comprising:

means for verifying the digital signature, wherein if the digital signature does not verify, processing of the directory file and at least one operating file are not performed.

14. The mailing machine of claim 8, wherein operational features include accounting features, postal service features, type and capacity of external scales that can be utilized with the mailing machine, printing of ad slogans, printing of inscriptions, and data capture features.

15. A mailing machine comprising: /

a modem adapted to communicate with a remote data center via a network, the mailing machine adapted to receive from the data center a directory file and at least one operating file associated with a new operational feature to be enabled in the mailing machine, the directory file including an indication of all operational features that should be enabled within the mailing machine, each of the operational features having at least one associated operating file required to implement the operational feature;

a memory;

a controller coupled to the modem and memory, the controller adapted to determine if an operating file stored in the memory is not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file and delete any operating files stored in the memory that are not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file,

wherein deletion of any operating file stored in the memory of the mailing machine that is not associated with an operational feature indicated in the directory file disables an operational feature with which the deleted operating file is associated.

16. The mailing machine of claim 15, wherein the controller is further adapted to store the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature in the memory and activate the at least one operating file associated with the new

operational feature, thereby enabling the new operational feature in the mailing machine.

17. The mailing machine of claim 15, wherein the controller is further adapted to send confirmation, utilizing the modem, to the data center of receipt of the directory file and the at least one operating file associated with the new operational feature.

18. The mailing machine of claim 15, further comprising:

an activation status table stored in the memory, wherein the controller is further adapted to update the activation status table to correspond to the directory file.

19. The mailing machine of claim 15, wherein operational features include accounting features, postal service features, type and capacity of external scales that can be utilized with the mailing machine, printing of ad slogans, printing of inscriptions, and data capture features.